



The following is ANGAIR's response to DELWP's "Governance of the Great Ocean Road Issues Paper"

ANGAIR (Anglesea, Aireys Inlet Society for the Protection of Flora and Fauna Inc.) is a community conservation group of some 600 members located in the Eastern Otways and centred on Anglesea and Aireys Inlet townships. A major focus of ANGAIR is volunteer work to remove environmental weeds from the Great Otway National Park (GNOP) and other conservation reserves in the Surf Coast Shire and along the coastal strip. We have also worked with Alcoa for many years on their leased Crown Land and private land adjacent to Anglesea. This area was known as the Anglesea Heath and a large part is now part of the GONP. Regular working bees of members are held bi-weekly at a multitude of sites to tackle environmental weeds in the above mentioned areas. The GOR borders GONP for much of the distance between Anglesea and Aireys Inlet. ANGAIR had previously raised funds and campaigned successfully to have these environmentally sensitive and valuable coastal heathlands managed and protected as national park. ANGAIR also undertakes other activities including research and documentation of natural values, representation on various committees, an annual wildflower and art show, indigenous plant propagation and educational activities.

ANGAIR is keen to maintain the high natural biodiversity values around the Anglesea and Aireys Inlet communities including coastal, urban and rural areas. This involves working with many land managers. ANGAIR has strong working relationships with the following organisations, authorities and government departments concerned with environmental issues: Surf Coast Shire, GORCC (Great Ocean Road Coastal Committee), DELWP, Parks Vic, FEO (Friends of Eastern Otways), FOPA (Friends of Point Addis) and FERMS (Friends of Eagle Rock Marine Sanctuary), BATA (Business and Tourism Anglesea), AIDA (Aireys Inlet District Association) and Alcoa.

ANGAIR believes it is timely to review governance arrangements due to increased population and tourism pressure and climate risks to coastal assets as noted in the recent Victorian Auditor General's Report.

At the local level ANGAIR has been closely involved with the DELWP and Alcoa community consultation associated with decommissioning of the Alcoa Power Station and coal mine. We understand that some development is inevitable with land use changes but any proposals need to be sustainable and acceptable to the residents of Anglesea.

What do you love most about the Great Ocean Road and its landscapes?

Its natural values. The Anglesea heathlands cover 6500 hectares, protect more than 700 native plant species (about a quarter of Victorian flora), including over 100 orchid species. It is an ecological asset of international significance and one of the few remnants of natural vegetation in south-western Victoria to have escaped farming and urbanisation. Significant flora include eight rare or threatened species at the national level, and twenty at state level. Two species, the Anglesea Grevillea and the Anglesea Slender Sun Orchid, are endemic to the area. There are 29 mammal species, including the critically endangered New Holland Mouse and rare species such as the Swamp Antechinus and White-footed Dunnart. Orchids are an outstanding feature, from the tiny Helmet Orchid to the Great Sun Orchid. The heathlands are one of the most orchid-rich sites in Australia.

What aspect of the Great Ocean Road and its landscapes would you most like to see protected?

All of the coastal strip and associated crown land reserves and their associated vegetation! This includes protecting native vegetation on private land.

What aspect of the Great Ocean Road and its landscapes would you most like to see changed?

Improved planning to retain flood plains for their primary purpose. Permanent town boundaries.

Do you work for, own or operate a business, or are you a member of a community organisation, that benefits from visitors to the Great Ocean Road Region? If so, what are the key issues for the organisation/business?

Yes. Annual Wildflower and Art Weekend. Issues: More integrated governance would make it easier to promote the event to maximise attendance.

Is there any critical issue or opportunity that we have missed (in chapter 3 of this Issues Paper)?

No

Do you have any suggested changes to the overarching policy, goals and principles (on pages 40 to 41)?

No

What elements would you like to see covered in a strategic framework plan for the Great Ocean Road Region?

Protection of natural assets and greater support of environmental volunteer organisations. Permanent town boundaries. Improved funding for crown land managers to cope with additional work that increased tourism brings.

What are your thoughts about establishing a new organisation to oversee the development, and coordinate implementation, of a Strategic Framework Plan for the Great Ocean Road Region?

We believe such an organisation is required. Membership should include community representatives ie residents/rate payers and community organisations.

What current constraints need to be addressed in the future governance arrangements? Planning processes need to be streamlined and take into account population increase and climate risks. Traffic safety issues on the GOR. Would a well-advertised policy to limit traffic on the GOR on Extreme or Code Red fire danger days be practical?

Are there any other management models/options we should consider?

No comment.

What criteria should the Taskforce use to evaluate the management model options?

No comment.

Regards


President

April 12, 2018